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Banning, Ephraim, 1849-1907.

In memoriam





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GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF UTAH
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In Memoriam.

Lucretia T. L. Banning.

June 5, 1853.—February 5, 1887.

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TO MY THREE MOTHERLESS CHILDREN,
IN THE FOND HOPE THAT THE
LIFE AND EXAMPLE OF THEIR NOBLE MOTHER
MAY INFLUENCE THEM
TO HIGH AND HOLY ASPIRATIONS,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE DEDICATED.

We turn to Thee, O Lord, our faith is weak ;
We cannot see beyond the range of sight.
There comes to us no cheering ray of light
From out the future, and Thy light we seek.
Thou hast drawn near and taken from our home
One that we loved. We cannot see why Thou
Did'st take the one most needed. But we bow
To Thy decree, and in submission come.
Help us to feel that all Thou dost is well ;
That Thou dost need the loved one more than we—
Hence Thou hast taken her to be with Thee
In that blest region where the ransomed dwell.
As one by one Thou dost our friends remove,
Help us to feel the comfort of Thy love.

—*Rev. Norman Plass.*

TO MY CHILDREN.*

God only knows the voyages marked out for the ships of life in which you are sailing, but, however smooth or tempestuous the seas that lie before you, it will always be your privilege to look back and feel that your course in starting was guided by the prayers and counsels of a wise and loving Christian mother.

Our highest attainments are often traceable directly to a mother's influence; her prayers and counsels and loving sympathy and encouragement follow us all the way through life, and the vigor and strength of mind and character which her teaching inspires often enable us in after years to achieve our greatest victories. But, being now deprived of her personal presence and influence, I earnestly commend that in future years you study and reflect upon the beautiful pictures of your mother here presented; and may I not hope that in this way you will continue to be influenced for good by the memories of her pure and noble life?

* At the time of their mother's death my children were aged as follows, including unexpired months: PIERSON W., seven years and five months; WALKER, five years; EPHRAIM, one year and a half.—EPHRAIM BANNING.

Her implicit faith in God and love for His church and work; her cheerful, gentle, patient, self-sacrificing spirit; her sincerity in every work and purpose; her disinterested, thoughtful consideration for others; her earnest, constant anxiety for the true welfare of every member of her family, and particularly for your growth and progress in everything that tends to the development of that strength and vigor of character necessary to the highest type of manhood—these suggest some of the pictures reflected by the memory of your mother.

Many beautiful recollections of her home life have left their lasting imprint on others, and shall they be forgotten by her children? Another says of her that she was “so self-sacrificing, so helpful to others, so full of courage, energy and good cheer, her influence has extended far and wide; her works truly do live after her.” But shall they not also live and be reflected in the lives of those who bear her image?

Looking back, you will find in the line of your mother’s ancestry, from the time of their arrival in this country two centuries and a half ago, the names of strong and noble men—men who “certainly had piety and enterprise and sterling worth;” and shall not this long line of Christian ancestry lend emphasis to the teachings of your mother’s life, and also nerve you to high and noble actions? As in the case of

those gone before, shall not Christian faith be joined with intellectual strength and physical vigor in the lives of you who follow her?

For reasons which you may hereafter understand, I have not felt equal to the task of writing even a short sketch of your mother as she appeared in our every-day home life; and so, although I believe such a sketch would be most interesting to you in future years, I must necessarily leave you to study her person and character as portrayed by others.

FAMILY HISTORY.*

Mrs. LUCRETIA THALIA LINDSLEY BANNING was descended, through her mother, from the original settlers of New England, through a long line of ancestry extending over a period of 250 years.

Well authenticated family records show that this ancestry, in its many ramifications, was actively identified in private and in public capacities with the persistent labors and the numerous conflicts incident to the planting, the growth and the maturing of the peculiar and beneficent civil, religious and educational institutions that so distinguish our country. They participated largely in the notable war that liberated us from a condition of colonial dependency and servitude, and that culminated in placing us among the free and independent nations of the world. They also shared largely in the war of 1812.

Mrs. Banning's grandmother Buell, whose name, Lucretia, she bore, was a direct descendant of the sixth generation from William Buell, who emigrated from England and settled at Dorchester, near Boston,

* Written by Mrs. Banning's uncle, Wm. P. Pierson, of Onarga, Ill.

in 1630. In 1635 he, in company with a small colony, emigrated through the wilderness to the Connecticut river and founded the town of Windsor, Conn. His oldest son, Samuel, was also at a later day one of the founders of Old Killingworth, now Clinton, Conn. The Buells that have descended from the original immigrant, Wm. Buell, now number some thousands of persons.*

Mrs. Banning's grandfather, Philo Pierson, was a direct descendant of the sixth generation from Rev. Abraham Pierson, a native of Yorkshire, England. He graduated at the University of Cambridge in 1632. He came to New England in 1640. In 1641 he founded a church at Southampton, Long Island; also another, at a later period, at Branford, Conn., which churches he served successively as pastor for many years.†

Owing to changes introduced into the colonial government that were at the time deemed oppressive, and

* See History of the Buell Family in England and America, compiled and recently published in New York by the American College for Genealogical Registry, Family History, etc.

† While pastor at Branford, Rev. Pierson did much mission work among the Quiripi Indians of the New Haven Colony. Encouraged pecuniarily and otherwise by the Corporation in London for Propagating the Gospel in New England, he wrote a Catechism in the language and for the benefit of this Indian tribe. It was sent to the London Corporate Society to be published, but the vessel on which it was sent was cast away and all on board

that produced much dissatisfaction, Mr. Pierson, in the language of the historian, "accompanied by a large part of his flock, left Branford in 1667 and settled in New Jersey, at a place they named Newark, then a wilderness, now a region of cities, of enterprise, of manufactories, of literature, and what is more, of evangelical religion. Whatever faults those settlers had, they certainly had piety and enterprise and sterling worth. The Cranes, the Wards, the Harrisons, the Dodds, and others who left Branford, are names which will not be forgotten. Mr. Pierson, with all his mobility, was no mean man. 'A man of high character and commanding influence, a godly and learned man,' says Gov. Hutchinson, who personally knew him. 'A man,' says Cotton Mather, 'who, wherever

were lost. It was finally decided to print it in this country. It was printed at Cambridge, Mass., in 1658, with the following title:

SOME HELPS FOR THE INDIANS:

A CATECHISM

In the Language of the Quiripi Indians of New Haven Colony.

BY THE REV. ABRAHAM PIERSON.

Of this Catechism the learned Trumbull states that "it is believed to be the first work of an author belonging to either of the two colonies (Connecticut and New Haven) that was printed in this country." It was undoubtedly one of the first few books that were printed in the United States. It is quite a religious as well as literary curiosity. In 1873 this Catechism was reprinted at Hartford, Conn., by the Connecticut Historical Society, with a learned, critical and interesting introduction by the distinguished historian, J. Hammond Trumbull.

he came, he shone.' Newark was the third colony he had planted, or essentially aided in planting, within twenty-eight years, and there he remained with his people under a code of laws of his own choice, greatly beloved and honored, until his death on the 9th of August, 1678."

Such, according to the historian of those early times, was the character of the men who more than two hundred years ago settled in the wilderness of New Jersey and founded what is now known as the First Presbyterian Church of Newark.

The eldest son of Rev. Pierson—Rev. Abraham Pierson, Jr.—was for some years colleague pastor with his father, and served as sole pastor for ten or twelve years after his father's death. This son graduated at Harvard, Mass., about 1668. He was chosen the first President or Rector of Yale College in 1701, which position he occupied until his death, which occurred in 1707. In recent years a statue has been erected to his memory on the college grounds at New Haven.

Mrs. Banning's mother, Mrs. Caroline Pierson Lindsley, was a graduate of Ingham University, at her native town of Le Roy, New York. She was a successful teacher for some years in the ladies' seminaries at Danville and at Harrodsburgh, Ky. She was a scholarly woman, a frequent writer for the press,

and the author of several juvenile books. And Mrs. Banning herself was a highly educated woman, of varied accomplishments and possessing great brilliancy and intellectual power.

AS A SCHOOL GIRL.*

My first impression of Thalia when she came to us a school girl of fourteen, was her naturally extreme diffidence. In a few days my attention was attracted by her evident determination not to allow this diffidence to interfere with anything she thought she ought to do. After this it was a constant interest to watch frequent struggle and the invariable victory. Often in class when she would ask a question about some point not quite understood, the effort was so evidently painful that I often mentally asked the question whether any other pupil would do as much for the sake of a whole lesson. In curious contrast was her manner in regular recitation. There the *lesson* was her whole duty, and no thought of herself seemed to intrude.

* Written by Mrs. Emily Wilson Risser, of Onarga, Illinois, who was a teacher in the Onarga Institute for several years while Mrs. Banning, then living with her uncle, William P. Pierson, was a student in the Institute. Prof. A. G. Wilson, D. D., now of Lake Forest, Illinois, and brother of Mrs. Risser, was at the time pastor of the Presbyterian church in Onarga. The well trained and active mind of Mrs. Banning and her superior Christian character were, no doubt, largely influenced and formed by the faithful pastor and by the judicious and successful teacher, the writer of the above memorial.

In the class in grammar the study was taken topically, and the numbers went up and down as in an old-fashioned spelling class, except that on Friday the one who had been at the head the greatest number of days in the week got the mark for highest standing. This often made the contest on that day very exciting, as the class was large and about one-fourth of them would stand in about the same grade. There Thalia's concentration of thought and studious application gave her an easy victory over some who relied on quicker intellect; but very often she would refuse to take advantage of a little point which others would gladly have seized, and, though she would make the correction, would not take the place.

I often rejoiced over the lesson this carefulness was to the rest in the class, though I could not repress the disappointment I felt that she did not take the place I know she deserved. Many times since her example in this class has been spoken of by those who never seemed to notice it at the time.

Her quiet attention and kindness to homesick school girls will never be forgotten. To a busy teacher the cloud that gathers over the face of a young girl away from home for the first time, seems worse than many harder troubles. "To soothe and sympathize" takes the time and tact needed for many other things. How often we noticed the quiet way in which

Thalia would take such an one out at recess, plan a walk in the evening, or to go before school to look over a lesson, until in the interest excited the homesickness was forgotten.

Very vividly comes before me the time when she yielded herself to her Savior. I speak unhesitatingly in saying that, save two very similar cases, it was the most perfect self-consecration I have ever known. I had some talk with her on the Sabbath previous, and pointed out to her a favorite hymn in the Hymnal, then new. It was Number 214:

“Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me;
The changes that will surely come
I do not fear to see;
I ask Thee for a present mind,
Intent on pleasing Thee.”

The next Sabbath afternoon I had a precious talk with her, and found how completely she had made the language of the hymn her own. We agreed then to unite every week in praying for some one by name. Very soon after this it was her duty to have a recitation in the literary society. To my surprise, she gave most impressively the hymn just mentioned. The feeling of wonder is still with me that it should cause surprise, especially in a *Christian* school. To the surprised exclamation of her seat-mate, “I shouldn’t think you would recite a hymn!” she answered noth-

ing. The next morning she came to me with the question, "Do you think it was out of place?" but before a reply could be given came the earnest query, "Why should I fill my mind with things I do not want to keep there?"

How many girls of fifteen ask such a question? But not for a moment must the impression be given that she was not as ready for pleasure or bright, healthful enjoyment as any one.

How brightly she always came back from the Park! Always with some new treasure, something beautiful or curious, and every one must have a share in the pleasure, and what fun we had in dividing the "first fruits!"

After I went home I had some precious letters from her, one especially that I shall never forget. She went more into detail about her struggle before she became a Christian, and to my great surprise she wrote these words: "You cannot tell how closely I watched you, and I think if I had ever seen you grow tired of the work in the church, I would have given up, for a while at least." It was very startling to me, and has always been a lesson since—the unconscious influence we are wielding.

When I look back to those busy, crowded days, I see more clearly now than I did then how different she was from any other of the large number of pupils

we had in those three years. And I see, too, how much she helped me, by her quiet steadfastness—always reliable, always restful, and quietly but always firmly pursuing the right, humble, trustful, faithful.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

AT STEUBENVILLE SEMINARY.*

As I look back upon my acquaintance with Miss Lindsley, as we called her then, I am especially impressed with her perseverance, her faithfulness and her conscientiousness. When once her mind was made up to a certain course of action, she would spare no pains needful for following it out. She was always in danger of overburdening her strength with things which she proposed to herself to be done. She had a natural fondness for study, a keen delight in the acquisition of knowledge in all directions, and many times she trespassed dangerously upon the time that should have been given to sleep, so earnest was she in carrying out her plans of study.

As a teacher, she was eminently faithful and painstaking, always endeavoring to awaken in her pupils the desire for information and the habit of thinking for themselves. I remember her delight when she succeeded in dissecting for her physiology class the eye of an ox, and in showing them the back-bone of a

*Extract from a letter from Miss E. M. Buxton, a former teacher in the Steubenville Female Seminary.

fish. Teaching was not easy work for her, because she taxed her whole nature for her pupils.

As a friend, she was genial, kind and true, not giving her confidence to a large circle, and therefore not thoroughly known or appreciated by the many. But the few who were admitted into the inner chambers of her heart, trusted her and valued her friendship.

The intellectual element prevailed in her nature rather than the emotional. She rarely spoke or acted on the impulse of the moment. She was slow to make new friends, yet quick to discern and to honor desirable traits of character in those about her.

Humanly speaking, her life has come to its close too soon; but looking at the event in the light of Heaven, and thinking of the infinitely larger, richer and fuller life upon which she has entered there, we can even rejoice in the great gain that has come to her. And God knows better than we in what ways her motherly love may still care for and help the children she has left behind her.*

* Miss M. B. Hazlewood, another one of Mrs. Banning's associate teachers at Steubenville, writes: "I cannot feel sad for her—only for those who, having lived in her presence, have experienced a loss never to be regained this side of Paradise. Her life at Steubenville—so self-sacrificing, so helpful to others, so full of courage, energy and good cheer, her influence has extended far and wide; her works truly do live after her."

IN CHRISTIAN WORK.

At a meeting of the session and deacons of the Eighth Presbyterian Church of Chicago, held February 6, 1887, resolutions were adopted referring to Mrs. Banning's death as a "great bereavement and loss to the church," and bearing "testimony to the faithfulness and efficiency with which she had been with heart and hand in every work." In a letter written just after her death, Rev. Alexander Patterson, a former member of the church, says: "We are full of thoughts about her active life. Few are such workers in any church—so untiring, so cheerful and so patient in all she did; only anxious to see the work done and ready to do it. The Eighth has had many losses, but none like this." *

This is the language of those who knew Mrs. Banning well in Eighth Church work; but her later service in the Master's cause was not limited to this

* Rev. J. M. Worrall, D. D., pastor of the Eighth Church at the time Mrs. Banning became one of its members and for three or four years thereafter, says: "Mrs. Worrall and I, and in fact all of our family who knew her, had come not only greatly to respect Mrs. Banning, but to love her as well. Her fine intelligence, her universal kindness of manner, and her true and untiring devotion to duty, either to God and His church or to the family God had

field alone. The last summer of her life was spent at Waukegan, one of Chicago's beautiful suburbs, where she was also active in church and benevolent work. Rev. James Frothingham, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Waukegan, says that "her active piety was recognized by the church, especially the ladies, who valued her counsels and congratulated themselves upon such an accession to their number." In the annual report of the Ladies' Missionary Society her work at Waukegan is thus referred to: "While here, she was a regular attendant at our meetings (although not a member of the society), ever stimulating us to activity by her earnestness and zeal in Christian work. In November she returned to her home in the city, and has since entered into rest, having laid aside her armor to wear a crown." And, as appears elsewhere, Mrs. Banning was also active in interesting the ladies of Waukegan in our Presbyterian Hospital work.

In recording a few memories of the late Mrs. Banning, the writer* is aware of his inability to express in

gathered around her, impressed not only us who knew her best, but all who knew anything of her life, with a sense of esteem and regard felt for but very few. We feel that our life is made poorer, a very great deal, that she has been taken from its sphere of intercourse and personal friendship."

* Mr. F. A. Redington, the oldest member of the Session of the Eighth Presbyterian Church.

words which at best are mere shadows of thought, the loss which has befallen us, or the sorrow which the hand of the destroyer has laid upon us, or the merits of the deceased.

As a mother devoted to the welfare of her children in this life as well as the life to come—as a philanthropist whose heart went out in intense longing for the amelioration of the condition of the suffering and needy—as a Christian consecrated to the Master's service, she had few equals and no superior.

While among the foremost in every good work for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the church at home, she was also among the foremost of the many active and zealous ladies of our church in support of our home missionaries, as well as those who had forsaken all that was dear to them at home to carry the Gospel to the benighted in foreign lands.

Her zeal for the Savior's cause was so absorbing that recreation and needed rest found no place in her life when she saw an opening for Christian work. An inspiration seemed to impel her to do in a brief period of time, what is usually regarded as a prolonged life work. What she accomplished was a life work, yet how brief, how beautiful, how grand!

The blossoms of that life were still fragrant when the ripened fruit was garnered on high. In the prime of her life her work was finished and she was called

hence to hear the welcome words, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

When the earth and sea shall have delivered up their dead and all the nations shall stand before God to be judged for the deeds done in the body, her record will be found in the book of life which He alone whom she served here will be able to open. Her name will be found written there.

Dorcas' death was mourned by the widows whose garments she had made, and in answer to Peter's prayer she was restored to life. Mrs. Banning's death is mourned, not by the widows alone, but also by the members of the church and congregation—not only on account of our loss of the fruits of her skill with the needle, but also for the loss of her care for the poor and needy, the sick and afflicted, as well as her readiness to contribute her skill in edifying the worshipers in our weekly service of sacred song, in the meetings for conference and prayer.

Her efficiency as an organizer in carrying out the various benefactions of the ladies of our church, which they executed with a degree of skill that won the admiration of all, was appreciated to that degree that the question after her departure was asked, "How can we get along without her?"

While we mourn our loss and shed tears of sym-

pathy for the bereaved husband and motherless children, we dare not ask that she, like Dorcas, be restored to mortal life. She has gained the victory over death and gone where the weary are at rest.

She has not forgotten friends, relatives, husband or children left below. She is not like the rich man pleading that a messenger be sent to warn her loved ones not to go to her, but she is waiting for Him before whose throne she stands to bring them with the children whom she had consecrated to His care, in due time, to her embrace, when God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.

IN THE LADIES' SOCIETY.*

We who enjoyed the privilege of being co-workers with our dear and lamented sister, Mrs. Banning, would not willingly miss this opportunity of adding our testimony to the worth and loveliness of her Christian character. Ever unmindful of self, and often going beyond her strength, she worked with untiring zeal for the uplifting and advancement of every good cause. Her cheerful life and unselfish Christian example helped us greatly in our labor of love and charity.

Indeed, it was she to whom we owe the broadening

* Written by Mrs. J. R. Bowye, and adopted by the Ladies' Aid Society of the Eighth Presbyterian Church.

of our work, showing us the possibilities of a more extended field of usefulness, which we will endeavor to fulfill and support, and when cast down with discouragements the thought of her shall be our beacon. She never failed in giving us the encouragement and sympathy which led to renewed hope and effort.

The change of name, from the Ladies' *Sewing* Society to the Ladies' *Aid* Society; the "Benevolent Committee," which has done such noble work outside of the Deacons' Board; the opening of the "Industrial School" in the Onward Mission; the organization of the "*Young* Ladies' Aid Society," as also the "Young Ladies' Missionary Society," and the representation of our Society on the Boards of the different Christian and charitable institutions of the city, are all additions due to her loving thoughtfulness and perseverance.

To us who knew her most intimately, it was given to love her most. Her loss to us as a Society is irreparable: we miss and mourn her constantly, but we do not mourn as they who cannot be comforted. We know that all is well with her; that she has "fought the good fight and finished her course, and henceforth there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give her at that day."

INTEREST IN THE PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL.

Whatever good the Presbyterian Hospital* may have accomplished, whatever suffering it may have been the means of relieving, has been made possible, for the most part, by the untiring energy and zeal of a number of faithful and prayerful women;—women whose visits were like the rays of sunshine which disperse darkness and dispel gloom, and the memory of whose loving words and sympathy made suffering less intense, and wakeful, sleepless nights seem shorter;—women who, keenly alive to its necessities, have been active in enlisting the hearts of men and women in the work.

Of this number was Mrs. Banning. Her coming to the hospital brought sunshine and gladness, and, when among her friends, she lost no opportunity to awaken sympathy and interest in a work so dear to her heart.

Less than a year ago she wrote that some friends at Waukegan desired information about the Hospital, and wanted some of our reports. Instead, however, of sending the reports, I decided to call in person, and so informed her. A few days later I received a letter

* Written by Dr. H. B. Stehman, Medical Superintendent of the Presbyterian Hospital, Chicago.

from one of the ladies of the Presbyterian Church at Waukegan, saying:

"Mrs. Banning, of the Eighth Church of Chicago, has been spending the summer here. In a quiet way she has awakened quite an interest in the Presbyterian Hospital.

"A friend has written her that some one connected with the institution will visit us ere long and give us necessary information in regard to the work that we might do for it. We would like to know when the person will visit us, so as to have as many ladies out as possible. In the meanwhile, send some circulars or catalogues, if you have them, to prepare the way."

Soon after receiving this letter a meeting was arranged; the pastor was there, the ladies of the church turned out in full force, and Mrs. Banning was there. The following month we received a handsome donation from these same ladies, and since then the church at Waukegan has for a time supported a bed in the hospital.

This letter portrays very beautifully Mrs. Banning's methods, and carries with it the evidence of her successes. We are told that she worked "in a quiet way;" and how well, any one can read between the lines of this letter—which is a sweet, unstudied tribute to the memory of one who went about doing good, sent to an entire stranger.

Our * beloved sister in the church, who was instrumental with Dr. Stehman in interesting the people of Waukegan in the Presbyterian Hospital last fall, was lately summoned from a life of unusual usefulness to "come up higher," where, with the redeemed of the Lord, she is singing everlasting praises to our blessed Redeemer, whom it had been her constant delight to love and serve. Counted by years, as we count age, she was quite young, but counted by good deeds she would be among the aged. Ever since the Presbyterian Hospital was in its incipency Mrs. Ephraim Banning has been in active sympathy with it, doing all in her power to promote its interests.

The bereaved husband and three motherless little boys, bereft of wifely counsel and a loving and devoted mother's care, have our warmest sympathy in their deep affliction, and church and society have lost a bright and active Christian, who will ever be held in sweet remembrance. We seem to hear "a voice from Heaven," saying:

"I shine in the light of God;
His image stamps my brow;
Through the shadows of Death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now.

* Extract from a Report of the Visiting Committee of the Ladies' Aid Society of the Presbyterian Hospital of Chicago, written by Mrs. William R. White, and read at a meeting at the Palmer House, March 7th, 1887.

No breaking heart is here,
 No keen and thrilling pain,
 No wasted cheek, where the burning tear
 Hath rolled, and left its stain.

“I have found the joys of Heaven;
 I am one of the angel band;
 To my head a crown is given,
 And a harp is in my hand;
 I have learned the song they sing,
 Whom Jesus hath made free,
 And the glorious walls of Heaven still ring
 With my new-born melody.

“No sin, no grief, no pain,
 Safe in my happy home;
 My fears all fled, my doubts all slain,
 My hour of triumph come.
 O friends of my mortal years!
 The trusted and the true,
 You are walking still the vale of tears,
 But I wait to welcome you.

“Do I forget? Oh! no,
 For memory's golden chain
 Shall bind my heart to the hearts below
 Till they meet and touch again;
 Each link is strong and bright,
 While love's electric flame
 Flows freely down, like a river of light,
 To the world from whence I came.

“Do you mourn when another star
 Shines out from the glorious sky?
 Do you weep when the voice of war
 And the rage of conflict die?
 Why then should your tears roll down,
 Or your heart be sorely riven,
 For another gem in the Savior's crown
 And another soul in Heaven?”

EARTHLY SERVICE—HEAVENLY GAIN.*

TEXT—*Phil. i: 21*: For me to live is Christ; and to die is gain.

When the telegraph brought me the message that this dear friend was dead, there flashed through my mind these words of the Apostle: "For me to live is Christ; and to die is gain." No fitter words can describe the life and character of her whom we mourn to-day.

Let us endeavor to grasp their teaching and lessons. "For me to live is Christ; and to die is gain."

Strange words these for a prisoner. Stranger still they seem for an aged man awaiting a hearing at the tribunal of the relentless Nero.

For nearly two years Paul had been at Rome. The events that had brought him there; the malice and persecutions of his countrymen, who thought to silence the tongue whose logic they could not meet; the confinement at Cæsarea; his trials before Festus, Felix and King Agrippa; the voyage, the shipwreck

* Funeral Service in the Eighth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, on Monday, February 7th, 1887, by Rev. Alexander G. Wilson, D. D., of Lake Forest, Ill.

—all these are familiar events. For two years he had dwelt in his own hired house. He enjoyed the liberty of his parole. He “preached the Gospel unto all who came unto him.”

Toward the close of this period, circumstances combined to make his prison life more rigorous. The ominous portents of the coming persecution, against which innocence was no protection, were seen and heard. Friends, fearing for their safety, or more probably summoned by duty, had left the Apostle. A little later he wrote, with touching pathos: “Only Luke is with me.”

At this period, and with these surroundings, the church at Philippi sends “once and again to his necessities.” One of their own number, Epaphroditus—probably their pastor—bore their offering. His exposure and his services brought on “a sickness nigh unto death.” When recovered and about to return home, the Apostle wrote this letter of grateful thanks to the church at Philippi. It expresses the warmth of his affection for them, and his gratitude for their timely gifts. It is especially valuable because of this calm utterance of “Paul the aged,” in view of the uncertain issue of his trial, and the prospect of immediate death.

There is no uncertain sound in these words. If I live, he is saying, I live for Christ. I shall go on with

the work in which I have been engaged. I will not desert it or vary from it. If I die, the act of dying will be short, and the after blessedness will be eternal gain.

How forcibly he teaches us that the service of Christ was the principle that guided his life, and bounded all his ambitions and hopes! Christ's cause was the object and aim of his life.

And whence this motive? What the source of this confidence?

About a quarter of a century before, on his way to Damascus, Jesus had spoken to him; had called him into His kingdom and His service. And now during all these years he has been drinking in the words of the humble Gallilean who brought life and immortality to light.

A little earlier he had witnessed a scene at Jerusalem which must have made a deep impression on him. When Stephen died that sublime death, when he saw the heavens opened to his dying vision and Jesus standing, as Chrysostom so beautifully says, "as if He had risen from His throne to succour His persecuted servant, and to receive him to Himself," Saul was consenting to his death.

The Apostle, too, was familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. As a devout and learned Jew he had been taught the Holy Scriptures from his youth.

And while it is a fact that the revelation concerning the future existence does not have the clearness and fulness in the Old Testament that it receives in the New, it is nevertheless true that the knowledge of the future state was possessed by patriarchs and prophets. Job, Moses, David, Daniel, all use expressions that show clearly their belief in existence beyond the grave. The elders who obtained a good report through faith sought "a better country, that is an heavenly."

Paul had another source of knowledge of which he tells us in the Epistle to the Corinthians: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third Heaven. And I knew such a man, how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." It is of himself that the Apostle here speaks. Language was too poor to clothe the communications which he was not permitted to make known to others. But they were none the less certain revelations to himself. He had thus a ground of certain knowledge—not granted to others. He could speak confidently of the mysteries and glories of Heaven which are veiled from our eyes.

Nor must it be forgotten that the Apostle wrote and spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

To him, sharing the Apostolic commission to complete the revelation of the divine will, was the special promise of the Spirit to guide him into all truth.

Such were his sources of knowledge. Shall he hesitate to believe the truth thus confirmed? Is he not qualified to speak confidently of what he has been taught and heard? Who better qualified by his personal knowledge to bear testimony concerning the unseen and eternal?

How confident and suggestive the Apostle's words when he says: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!" Heaven is then a home, not made by human hands, but built by God; not erected upon some favored spot of earth, but in the highest heavens; not subject to decay and ruin, but with an adamantine structure that shall last forever. How suggestive these terms are of an enduring home-life! How they speak of an attractiveness and sweetness that shall know no end! How they comprise the elements of endurance and blessedness, for want of which our earthly homes are so often filled with sorrow and sadness! Will not this home be worthy of its builder? Shall we give wings to the imagination in the vain attempt to describe it? Shall we dip fancy's brush in glowing colors to paint it?

Rather let us reverently ponder its description—no doubt far below the reality—as written by one who was permitted to see its glories, and whose pen was guided by unerring wisdom, in the closing chapters of Revelation.

Well may we believe that He who hath planned the worlds, scattering beauty far and wide, who Himself dwells in light inaccessible and full of glory, hath royal splendors, heart comforts and grateful provisions for those inner homes, the mansions, the abiding places of His great house, where He is and has been gathering His children in all the ages. Into that blessed home, far removed from the noise and turmoil of this busy earth, the souls of the redeemed are continually passing. Upborne by angels' wings, redeemed spirits may quickly enter that blessed home; and there, beyond the range of this world, they will abide secure and happy evermore.

“Eye hath not seen their blessed employ,
 Ear hath not heard their deep songs of joy,
 Dreams cannot picture a world so fair,
 Sorrow and death enter not there;
 Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom,
 Far beyond the clouds, beyond the tomb,
 The clime of salvation is there.”

With this overmastering confidence in the reality of eternal things, and with the desire to depart and be with Christ, to see the King in His beauty, to enjoy

His sympathy and presence, yet convinced that for the sake of others it is more needful for him to abide in the flesh, the Apostle is content to wait the time of his Master's summons; and while that is delayed to devote life and energy to Christian service. This was his present duty. If it was his Master's will, he would continue in this work.

Ready for either event—to live for Christ, or to die and enter into his Master's presence—he with assured confidence could say: "To die"—or, as in the Greek, "to have died"—"is gain."

Such has been the faith and the joyous anticipation of God's believing children in all the ages.

The principles of this text found exemplification in the life of Mrs. Banning; and the "gain" beyond our mortal vision has found full proof in her own glad experiences as she has been ushered into the presence of the King.

Lucretia Thalia Lindsley was born at Medina, New York, June 5, 1853, but passed her childhood at Rock Island, Illinois.

At the age of fourteen she came to reside in the home of her uncle, William P. Pierson, Esq., at Onarga, Illinois, and attend the parochial school then existing there.

It was there that, as pastor of the Onarga Presbyterian Church, my acquaintance first began with her.

Turning over a Pastor's Register, I find that on January 19, 1868, she was received into the church on profession of her faith, and was baptized. Her name heads the list of about a score who professed their faith in Jesus at that time, as the result of a special work of grace.

At Waukegan, during the summer months of the past year, I again had the privilege of having her as a worshiper in the congregation which I was supplying. The friendship of the early years was renewed—rather quickened, for it was never broken; and thus providentially I witnessed the beginning and almost the ending of her Christian life.*

The frank, vivacious, cheerful girl was, in that former period, just budding into a most promising womanhood. The same traits of character, that have since been so harmoniously and fully developed, were manifest, and even then gave her a marked individuality.

* In a private letter to Mr. and Mrs. Pierson, written just after the funeral, Dr. Wilson says:

"No death for years has touched my heart like this. I went down to comfort the friends, but my own eyes overflowed. During last summer we renewed or strengthened our interest and love in your niece and her little family, and learned to know the ripeness of character and the intellectual culture that had come in these maturer years. We also were permitted to know something of the plans for increased usefulness in the Master's service, and to hear hopeful expressions about the children's training and

I shall never forget when, at an anniversary gathering of the church, during the exercises, she recited with remarkable pathos and earnestness some stanzas of the then newly published, but now familiar song :

“Tell me the old, old story.”

Her religious life, from the beginning, was decided and joyous. Every known duty was bravely met, and there was a rapid and constant growth.

That uncle and aunt—to whose home no child had been given—found cheer and joy in the sunshine of her presence. The love of their hearts entwined around her, and to-day they mourn as one who mourneth for his first-born.

Grown in a short time to the limit of an academic school, she became a student in the Female Seminary at Steubenville, Ohio, of which the late Rev. Charles

future work. It was a rare privilege to associate with one so ripe, so helpful, and, had we known it, so near to our Father's home.

“Since their return to the city we had not met any of the family, and did not know of her illness until she had passed into the land where there is no more sickness.

“The providence is, to our feeble vision, inexplicable; but our God is wise and good. He understands it all. To us He will make it clear in due time. You know His words; lean on them. The meeting will come by and by, and all will rejoice together.

“I could not say all that was in my heart. A dear friend, a lovely woman, a devoted mother, an earnest Christian has been laid to rest beneath the winter snows; but let us think of the glorified spirit walking the golden streets and being ‘present with Christ.’”

C. Beatty, D. D., was then and for so many years the honored superintendent, and Dr. A. M. Reid the efficient principal.

Graduated in due course and with such honor that Dr. Beatty retained her services in connection with the school, and even before her graduation, to assist his defective sight, had given her the honorable post of private secretary—Miss Lindsley withdrew from this position to become the wife of Ephraim Banning, Esq., to whom she was married October 22d, 1878.

Since that time she has been in your midst, and you have known her as she went out and in in the daily walks of life, in the life and love of her home, in the ministries of kindness, in the work and worship of the sanctuary.

Shall I recall some of the characteristics of this life, which, alas! has gone out so early?

I.—Mrs. Banning had a marked individuality.

Gifted with brilliant intellectual powers, acquisition was easy and rapid. The curriculum of school studies was thoroughly mastered, and there was a reaching out after knowledge in many directions. Even amid the cares of the household, there was an economizing of time so as to pursue favorite studies to a still higher degree.

All this eager pursuit of knowledge was held strictly in subordination to her home duties and to

her religious life. With these they were never permitted to interfere for a moment.

Highly educated and possessed of the refinement of culture, there was here no shrinking from the duties of home, from the watching and the care of the mother, or the toil and activities that belong to modern church life.

The Master and His work, as found in the family and in the church, were first. Children to train for usefulness on earth and glory in Heaven; plans for promoting the efficiency and success of the church's work, were the frequent topics of her conversation. There was no shrinking from tasks because they were possibly unpleasant. Love and duty lightened every burden; and faith taught the lesson so thoroughly learned, that the Master is honored and served by faithfulness in the daily and common duties of life.

2.—Into this life the traits of Unselfishness, Cheerfulness, Earnestness and Devotedness were strongly interwoven.

In truth, these Christian graces were the woof into which was woven the warp of kindly deeds, generous words and charitable gifts, as the web of this daily life was beautifully woven.

There was an unselfishness in all her work and life. The good of others was the first in her thoughts; and many were the suggestions made and plans formed

that were intended to lighten the burden of others. She exemplified the great poet's adage: "Think of thyself last;" and the greater Apostle's command: "Bear ye one another's burdens."

Who that ever spent half an hour in Mrs. Banning's society failed to mark her constant cheerfulness? The sun always shone on her path, and its rays were reflected far and wide on those around her.

Her cheerfulness was habitual, and unconsciously affected others.

Earnestness of purpose and devotion to duty, as already said, marked this life. This was everywhere and always manifest.

Here is the message that comes from Waukegan: "When Mrs. Banning's death was announced in church last evening, a deep feeling of sorrow was manifest in the congregation. She had greatly endeared herself to us all. We feel as if we had lost a dear friend."

Such were, in brief outline, the characteristics of this Christian life.

What were its sources? Whence its spring? There can be but one answer. She, who lived it, had said from the heart: "For me to live is Christ." Her life "was hid with Christ in God." Like a fountain fed from an unseen source, this spiritual life was

watered and nourished by its constant contact with the word and spirit of Him who is the truth and the life.

To human eyes this source of power was not visible, but its results were manifest. And now, with the truth of the first part of this divine declaration so clear, shall we hesitate to believe that the other part is equally true? Shall we hesitate to believe that for her to die, to have died, is gain? When Christ who was her life shall appear, will she not appear with Him? Has there not been a realization of glory for this dear child of God, such as eye hath not seen or ear heard?

My dear friends: We stand face to face with one of the mysteries of human existence—with one of the unexplainable facts of God's providence.

Here falls asleep the young disciple still in vigor of youthful life, and with years of promise and service still in the future. Here passes away the wife, in whom the heart of her husband trusted; the mother, whose children most of all need her love and care. Too young to know their loss, they will only have a dim memory of mother's fair face and sweet voice; and the vision will seem to come from a far off land.

We are silent before such events. Human wisdom

can offer no solution of such providences. Like Job's friends, it sits in stony silence for days and nights before such griefs. Nay, even Christian faith is for a moment well nigh staggered at the blow. It needs to be aroused and reinvigorated by turning to the first truths of revelation.

God is good. He will not injure. He is too wise to err. No mistakes enter into his plans. Some higher and better work in the heavenly department of His kingdom has needed a workman, and He has taken our dear friend to enter upon it. We are shut up to the teaching of the Master: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." With enlarged knowledge and clearer vision, in the great eternity, we shall apprehend more fully the divine plan and the place that we and our friends, in the events of our lives, filled in it. Every murmur shall be hushed, and God's ways will be seen to have been just and right.

Now our tears fall when our friends find a shorter pathway to glory;—then and there shall every tear be wiped away.

Let the thought of Heaven check unbounded grief. "The shining shore we may almost discover." If our friends leave us, the separation will be brief; the reunion soon and eternal.

In faith and patience let us walk the pathway that
God has marked for us.

“The night is mother of the day,
The winter of the spring;
And ever upon old decay
The greenest mosses cling.

“Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Through showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all His works,
” Has left His hope with all.”

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